

We claim:

1. A method for appending information to a graphical image file comprising the steps of:

creating a graphical image, said image containing at least one object;

5 creating a graphical image file of said created graphical image;

defining an area on the created image as a hotspot area;

inserting the information about the defined hotspot area into a data record; and

generating an appendix to the graphical image file using the information about the hotspot area, the appendix being the data record containing the information about the defined hotspot area.

2. The method as described in claim 1 further comprising the step of appending the generated appendix to the graphical image file.

15 3. The method as described in claim 1 wherein the step of defining an area on the created image as a hotspot area further comprises using an image creation tool.

4. The method as described in claim 1 wherein the step of defining an area on the created image as a hotspot area further comprises using an external tool.

20 5. The method as described in claim 1 wherein the graphical image file has a JPEG file format.

6. The method as described in claim 1 wherein said appendix generation step further comprises the steps of:

reading the length of the graphical image file;

appending the data record containing the information about the defined hotspot area to the graphical image file and thereby creating a new graphical image file;

appending the length of the new graphical image file to the end of said new file;

30 and

storing the new graphical image file.

7. The method as described in claim 6 wherein the length of the new graphical image file is stored in a field at the end of the graphical image file.

8. The method as described in claim 6 further comprising after said storing step, the
5 step of decoding the data in the appendix to the graphical image file.

9. The method as described in claim 8 wherein said decoding step further comprises the steps of:

10 reading the length of the new graphical image file including the appendix portion of the file;

determining whether this graphical image file has an appendix;

determining the length of the original graphical image file when there is an appendix;

determining the starting location of the appended information; and

15 reading all information contained in the appended portion of the graphical image file.

10. The method as described in claim 9 wherein said length determination step comprises subtracting n number of bytes from the length of the new graphical image file.

20 11. The method as described in claim 9 wherein said start location determination step comprises using the length obtained in claim 10 to find a start of information field in the graphical image file.

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12. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for appending information to a graphical image file comprising:

instructions for creating a graphical image, said image containing at least one object;

5 instructions for creating a graphical image file of said created graphical image;

instructions for defining an area on the created image as a hotspot area;

instructions for inserting the information about the defined hotspot area into a data record; and

10 instructions for generating an appendix to the graphical image file using the information about the hotspot area, the appendix being the data record containing the information about the defined hotspot area.

13. The computer program product as described in claim 12 further comprising instructions for appending the generated appendix to the graphical image file.

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14. The computer program product as described in claim 12 wherein the instructions for defining an area on the created image as a hotspot area further comprises instructions for using an image creation tool.

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15. The computer program product as described in claim 12 wherein the instructions for defining an area on the created image as a hotspot area further comprises instructions for using an external tool.

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16. The computer program product as described in claim 12 wherein said appendix generation instructions further comprise:

instructions for reading the length of the graphical image file;

5 instructions for appending the data record containing the information about the defined hotspot area to the graphical image file and thereby creating a new graphical image file;

instructions for appending the length of the new graphical image file to the end of said new file; and

instructions for storing the new graphical image file.

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17. The computer program product as described in claim 16 wherein said storing instructions further comprise instructions for storing the length of the new graphical image file at the end of the graphical image file.

15 18. The computer program product as described in claim 16 further comprising after said storing instructions, instructions for decoding the data in the appendix to the graphical image file.

19. The computer program product as described in claim 18 wherein said decoding instructions further comprise:

20 instructions for reading the length of the new graphical image file including the appendix portion of the file;

instructions for determining whether this graphical image file has an appendix;

25 instructions for determining the length of the original graphical image file when there is an appendix;

instructions for determining the starting location of the appended information; and

instructions for reading all information contained in the appended portion of the graphical image file.

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20. The computer program product as described in claim 19 wherein said length determination instructions further comprise instructions for subtracting n number of bytes from the length of the new graphical image file.

5 21. The computer program product as described in claim 20 wherein said start location determination instructions further comprise instructions for using the length to find a start of information field in the graphical image file.

22. A system for appending information to a graphical image file comprising:

10 an image generating tool, said tool being a software program for creating images in a computing system;

an image file module for creating an image file of an image created by said image generating tool;

15 an image extension module, said extension module being a software program capable of appending image definition information to an image file and creating an extended image file; and

an image extension decoder module, said decoder module being a software program capable of converting extended image file into an original image file and image definition information.

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23. The system as described in claim 22 further comprising an image information definition tool for generating image definition information.

24. The system as described in claim 22 wherein said image definition information is
25 image hotspot definition information.

25. The system as described in claim 22 wherein said image generating tool is a presentation slide program.

30 26. The system as described in claim 22 wherein said image file module further comprises the capability to create image information definitions.

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27. The system as described in claim 26 wherein said image file module is part of said image generating tool.

28. The system as described in claim 22 wherein said image definition information is image hotspot definition information.

29. The system as described in claim 22 wherein said image generating tool is a graphics software program.

30. The system as described in claim 23 wherein said decoder module is a plugin program contained in a webBrowser module.

31. The system as described in claim 23 wherein said decoder module is a special purpose program within a computing machine.

32. The system as described in claim 23 further comprising navigation and display software modules within a webBrowser module.

33. The system as described in claim 23 further comprising special purpose navigation and display program within a computing machine.

34. The system as described in claim 23 wherein said decoder module is a plugin program contained in a webBrowser module.

35. The system as described in claim 23 wherein said decoder module is a special purpose program within a computing machine.

36. The system as described in claim 23 further comprising navigation and display software modules within a webBrowser module.

38. The system as described in claim 22 wherein said decoder module is a native
5 webBrowser that has been enhanced to perform the decoding.